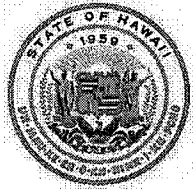


**SB 169**



**STATE OF HAWAII**  
STATE COUNCIL  
ON DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES  
919 ALA MOANA BOULEVARD, ROOM 113  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96814  
TELEPHONE: (808) 586-8100 FAX: (808) 586-7543  
February 18, 2009

The Honorable David Y. Ige, Chair  
Senate Committee on Health  
Twenty-Fifth Legislature  
State Capitol  
State of Hawaii  
Honolulu, Hawaii 96813

Dear Senator Ige and Members of the Committee:

**SUBJECT: SB 169 – RELATING TO HAWAII HEALTH CORPS**

The position and views expressed in this testimony do not represent nor reflect the position and views of the Department of Health (DOH).

The State Council on Developmental Disabilities (DD) **SUPPORTS THE INTENT OF SB 169**. The purpose of SB 169 is to establish the Hawaii Health Corps program to provide stipends to physicians and dentists to help repay their student loan debt, to ease the cost of living and malpractice insurance in Hawaii. The bill requires a minimum of three years of service in health professional shortage areas and service as a first responder during civil defense and other emergencies while enrolled in the program, and gives priority preference to local professionals and professionals practicing in specialty areas.

SB 169 would assist in recruiting physicians and dentists to provide medical and dental care services for individuals with DD, especially in underserved and rural areas. Access to medical and dental care is often challenging for individuals with DD and their families. Numerous individuals and families say that they cannot find a dentist willing to accept Medicaid participants because of the paper work and low reimbursement rates.

The Council would like to note that SB 416 - Relating to Hawaii Health Corps Program, similarly addresses the need for programs to assist with health care shortage areas within the State, particularly in rural areas. **The Council believes that there are merits for both bills and ask for your consideration to amend the bill by incorporating the concepts of both SB 169 (stipends to repay loans and Hawaii Health Corps Special Fund) and SB 416 (loan repayment and recruitment incentive programs) into one bill to implement a multi-faceted approach to address the shortage of and increase access to health care professionals.**

The Honorable David Y. Ige  
Page 2  
February 18, 2009

The Council defers to DOH regarding the applicability funds to be allocated from the Community Health Centers and Trauma System special funds to create the Hawaii Health Corps special fund, and the cost associated with the implementation of the program.

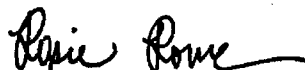
The Council applauds the Legislature's initiative and foresight to address the shortage of physicians and dentists through the establishment of the Hawaii Health Corps program.

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony supporting the intent of SB 169.

Sincerely,



Waynette K.Y. Cabral  
Executive Administrator



Rosie Rowe  
Chair

# HMSA



An Independent Licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association

February 18, 2009

The Honorable David Ige, Chair  
The Honorable Josh Green M.D., Vice Chair

Senate Committee on Health

**Re: SB 169 – Relating to Hawaii Health Corps**

Dear Chair Ige, Vice Chair Green and Members of the Committee:

The Hawaii Medical Service Association (HMSA) appreciates the opportunity to testify in support of SB 169.

All organizations and entities engaged in health care are working to ensure that the members of our community are able to access appropriate health care when they need it. Working towards this HMSA has supported UH's rural residency program, worked with the Hawaii/Pacific Basin Area Health Education Center to provide travel support funding for up to 25 medical students to perform primary care clinical rotations on neighbor islands, and introduced its Online Care program to improve access across the state.

The initiatives contained in SB 169 will be a welcome addition to and compliment those already in place across the state. HMSA supports this comprehensive strategy to recruit and retain physicians in the more rural areas of the state.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "JD", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jennifer Diesman  
Assistant Vice President  
Government Relations



## Hawai'i Primary Care Association

345 Queen Street | Suite 601 | Honolulu, HI 96813-4718 | Tel: 808.536.8442 | Fax:  
808.524.0347  
www.hawaiipca.net

To: **The Senate Committee on Health**  
The Hon. David Y. Ige, Chair  
The Hon. Josh Green, MD, Vice Chair

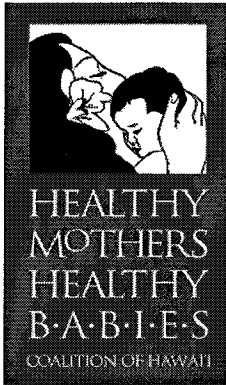
**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 169**  
**Relating to Hawaii Health Corps**  
**Submitted by Beth Giesting, CEO**  
**February 18, 2009, 3:15 p.m. agenda, Room 016**

The Hawaii Primary Care Association urges your support for this bill. Of all the proposed measures that would improve recruitment and retention of key health care providers in underserved areas, this is one of the most comprehensive.

We support it because:

- It addresses both physician and dentist shortages.
- It provides a flexible stipend that could be used for loan repayment but could also be applied to level other economic challenges in serving underserved areas.
- It identifies a critical clinical workforce to serve in the event of an emergency situation.

Thank you for the opportunity to testify on this measure.



February 17, 2009

TO: Senator David Y. Ige, Chair; Senator Josh Green, M.D., Vice Chair  
Members, Committee On Health  
FROM: Jackie Berry, Executive Director  
RE: **SB 169 Relating to Hawaii Health Corps**  
Hearing: Wednesday, February 18, 2009

Honorable Chairperson Ige, Vice Chairperson Green and Members of the Committee on Health

HMHB is a statewide coalition of public and private agencies and individuals committed to the improvement of maternal and infant health status in Hawaii through education, coordination and advocacy. **HMHB is testifying today in support of SB 169, establishing the Hawaii health corps that will provide annual stipends to physicians and dentists who work in health professional shortage areas and shortage specialties.**

One of the central components to ensuring access to health care is having qualified health professionals to provide the services. As we all know, there are areas of the State of Hawaii that have very serious shortages. The data on access to prenatal care indicates that a major reason for late and inconsistent prenatal care is access to physicians, particularly on the island of Hawaii and in the rural areas of Oahu. Getting appropriate and timely prenatal care is a major indicator affecting birth outcomes.

We urge you support of this bill.

Mahalo for your consideration of this bill and our testimony.

1500 South Beretania St, #308, Honolulu Hawaii 96826  
phone # (808) 951-5805, fax # (808) 941-4102  
e-mail: [jackieb@hmhb-hawaii.org](mailto:jackieb@hmhb-hawaii.org) website: [www.hmhb-hawaii.org](http://www.hmhb-hawaii.org)

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**From:** sierra [sierra@alohabroadband.com]  
**Sent:** Monday, February 16, 2009 6:21 PM  
**To:** HTHTestimony  
**Subject:** Testimony SB 169 & SB 416

**Categories:** Green Category, Blue Category

SB 169 Establishes the Hawaii Health Corps SB 416 Relating to the Hawaii Health Corps

Senate Committee on Health  
Wednesday February 18, 2009  
3:15 PM  
Conference Room 016  
6 copies

Dear Chairman Ige, Vice Chair Green and Members of the Health Committee,

I am writing in support of both SB 169 and SB 416 which relate to the establishment and functional parameters of the Hawaii Health Corps.

The establishment of this Entity would go a long way in helping to solve the health care crisis we are facing on our neighbor islands. On the Big Island

we have an acute shortage of primary care physicians and specialists. We have lost many in the last two years.

I am a registered dental hygienist in Kona and have been practicing here for 22 years.

In my time here, we have always experienced a manpower distribution problem.

We have an adequate number of hygienists on Oahu, but have always had a shortage of hygienists on neighbor islands, especially the Big Island.

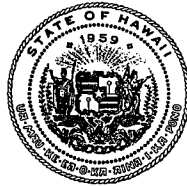
Establishing a program like the Hawaii Health Corps, will help to alleviate this problems by allowing for recruitment incentive programs which would be open to all health care professionals.

Please give your consideration and support to these Bills and help us find a way to provide improved medical and dental care for areas like the Big Island.

Mahalo for your attention,

Sierra Spruce, RDH  
Hawaii Dental Hygienists' Association  
Regulation and Practice Committee Chair  
2003 State President

POB 2138  
Kealahakua, HI 96750  
808-939-7100



LATE

STATE OF HAWAII  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH  
P.O. Box 3378  
HONOLULU, HAWAII 96801-3378

In reply, please refer to:  
File:

Senate Committee on Health

SB 169, RELATING TO HAWAII HEALTH CORPS

Testimony of Chiyome Leinaala Fukino, M.D.  
Director of Health

February 18, 2009  
3:15 PM

1 **Department's Position:** The Department of Health prefers the Hawaii Health Corps program  
2 outlined in SB 416 with proposed amendments and does not support SB 169 as written.

3 **Fiscal Implications:** The measure mandates award of \$900,000 (30 at \$30,000 each) in stipends the  
4 first year; an additional \$900,000 in the second year; and, another \$900,000 in the third year. At the  
5 proposed maximum number of 100 stipends annually, the cost would be \$3,000,000 annually in stipends  
6 plus the staff and operational expenditures required to set up and operate the program. Part of the  
7 funding for this program would be drawn from the community health centers special fund and the  
8 trauma system special fund.

9 **Purpose and Justification:** The bill asks the Department of Health to establish and operate the Hawaii  
10 Health Corps program to provide stipends for physicians and dentists who agree to provide a minimum  
11 of three years of service in health professional shortage areas of the State. The stipends of \$30,000 are  
12 intended to help physicians and dentists repay medical or dental school loan debt and to ease the high  
13 cost of living and professional liability insurance in Hawaii.

14 While we support what this measure is attempting to accomplish, we believe that SB 416 with  
15 proposed amendments is the more comprehensive of the two bills. The latter measure is the result of the



1 working group established by Act 242, SLH 2008, to address recruitment and retention of health care  
2 professionals to work in underserved areas of the State. Their report, submitted to the 2009 Legislature,  
3 recommends that a multi-pronged approach be used, and that a Hawaii Health Corps program include a  
4 state loan repayment program that qualifies for federal funds, and a recruitment program that provides  
5 incentives up to \$17,500 to health care professionals to live and work in Hawaii's rural communities.

6 We encourage the continued discussion on how best to use scarce federal and state resources to  
7 improve recruitment and retention of health care professionals in our rural and/or underserved areas.

8 We respectfully ask that this measure be held.

9 Thank you for the opportunity to testify.